

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, May 4, 2009
The Center of Clayton - Multipurpose Room A

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Jessie Hoagland
Ira Berkowitz	Robert Kerr
Mimi Deem	Eric Schneider
Judy Goodman	Mark Winings
Rosemary Hardy	

Excused/Absent

Dick Hyde
Omri Praiss

Also present:

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation
Eric Gruenenfelder
Liz Hickox
Steve Rosenblum
Mel Disney

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes were adopted as written. The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Addresses from the Audience

Mr. Steve Rosenblum presented an idea about a potential use for the Maryland School site to the Commission. His proposal included turning the area where the playground once was into a small community garden for the residents living around Westmoreland, which is near Hanley Park. Mr. Rosenblum said that the residents are asking the Parks and Recreation Commission to support the garden and help fund rain barrels, hoses, soil and other small materials for the garden. They have a Master Gardener and do not need the assistance of park maintenance staff. This idea has been discussed with members of the Clayton School Board, but only preliminary approval of the Clayton School District has been made at this time.

Mr. Kerr discussed the fact that getting liability insurance may need to come into play, especially because we do not know what is going to happen to the property in the future, and in case someone gets hurt while working in the garden. Further, the next step Mr. Rosenblum needs to make is to get official approval from the members of the school board and then return to the Commission with a detailed budgetary proposal. Mr. Berger said there is the potential for the Commission to make an in kind donation to support the garden. Ms. Deem stated that the garden would be educational for the community especially for those in the condo area. The discussion ended with a few more ideas including the fact that the original property at Hanley Park was used as a competitive garden, the potential of having a garden similar to this placed in Oak Knoll Park, and the fact that Public Works supplies plants in some areas of the City where public spaces are planted by community volunteers. .

Smoking Bans in Parks

Ms. DeForrest discussed the content of the smoking ban report that was distributed prior to the meeting. There are many cities on the east coast that have bans in place. In New York there are smoking bans in many of their parks. In California smoking is banned in parks and on beaches.

Mr. Berger stated that the detail of what the City of Clayton will do as far as non-smoking bans is uncertain at this time. He also said that what the BOA would like is a statement of support from the Commission. In the future there will be discussion based on the impact of a non-smoking policy at events like Parties in the Park and Taste of Clayton. There is a lot more research that needs to take place before any final decisions are made. Ms. Deem recommended that it would be good to observe what takes place this year at the Taste of Clayton and Parties in the Park. We may designate a smoking area at these events to see how much a separate area would be utilized.

Mr. Schneider made a motion stating that the Park and Recreation Commission recommend to the BOA that the current non-smoking policies at the park be enforced. We also recommend that the City Manager

work with staff to draft a non-smoking ordinance for review by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Further, the Parks and Recreation Commission supports enforcement of smoke-free ordinances in Clayton. Mr. Kerr seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Berger said that enforcement and education are the second phase of implementing smoking bans. Also, there is specific timeline with the BOA on smoking bans and they may vote on this topic as early as June. If a non-smoking ordinance is passed the ordinance will have many different components.

Director's Report

Ms. DeForrest reviewed the six month variance report with the Commission. The report provided the group with an overview of where City revenue and expense counts are at to date. We are currently meeting all of our revenue projections. There is a \$41,000 savings in full-time staff costs because the Field Technician position was vacant for six months. City adjustments are made every three months. The other budgetary items noted were that the rink staff costs are down, the Hanley House revenue has increased, and there will be an increase in prices at concessions this year.

The SummerQuest program starts three days after the school year ends. Since this is the case, we are unable to have as many summer camps as we have had in the past. This in turn means we will see a decrease in revenue in this area.

The USTA is helping us with the design for resurfacing of the tennis courts. They will then assist with development of the bid specifications. By working with them, we will be eligible for up to \$50,000 in grants to help fund this project. The USTA has not provided us with the final designs, which means it is very likely that we are not going to get this project completed this summer. We have entered the process during USTA staff changes. Mr. Gruenenfelder and Ms. DeForrest have been in contact with USTA and staff members have stated that they will get this designs to us in a timely manner. Ms. DeForrest asked the Commission if they wanted to continue working with the USTA or find a contractor to take over the project. She prefaced the question by letting the Commission know that other Parks and Recreation departments in the area have worked closely with the USTA because they are experts and have been very pleased with their work and assistance. The Commission members were all in favor with continuing to work with the USTA because the USTA knows the technical specification and have begun assisting us with the bid process. Ms. DeForrest has talked to the Clayton School District staff about tearing out the courts at the end of this tennis season, which means everyone will lose a couple of months at the beginning of the next session. At the latest, the courts would be ready by August 2010.

We did not receive the grant for the Walking Trail from the Department of Natural Resources. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is behind schedule with everything at the present time; therefore we are waiting on the Land/Water Conservation department for approval on the Inclusion Playground projects. We have started working on a design for the playground. We have talked with Unlimited Play and with the BOA about assisting us with a timeline. Our focus has to be on developing good designs to help us with grant applications.

We will continue to distribute a monthly calendar of events prior to each meeting. The calendar will be included with the Commission packets. Next month recommendations need to be made about fees and charges. The policy and procedure manuals are in the process of being update. Ms. DeForrest's plan is to share the manuals with the Commission at the end of the summer.

Shaw Park Ice Rink End of Season Report

Ms. Hickox, Assistant Athletic and Facilities Supervisor, conducted a presentation about the Shaw Park Ice Rink with the assistance of Mr. Gruenenfelder, Superintendent of Recreation. A summary of the report was distributed prior the meeting. Overall, there was a 10.16% increase in revenue with a slight increase in expenses over 2008; however, they ended the season with a net improvement of 56.13%. The increase in revenue was mostly generated because more consistent public sessions were held this season, which meant more revenue from daily admission fees. Non-resident season passes doubled, as well. The financial report showed that there was a 14% increase in staffing cost. This increase is in correlation to the increase in public skate sessions. The Athletic and Facilities department recommends adding even more consistent public sessions next season. They also recommend making improvements to the party room

that would include new furniture and decorations. Staff would also like to remove the blue paneling and add wood paneling to make the lobby area feel more like a lodge.

Old Business / New Business

The shade structures for Shaw Park Aquatic Center have been ordered. We are not sure if the structures will arrive before the pool opens for the season. Mr. Gruenenfelder has been in contact with a representative from the company on a regular basis.

The herb sale at the Hanley House was a huge success. Ms. Umlauf sold out of herbs early in the day. The Tea Parties scheduled for that day were cancelled because there was not enough interest. Further, the archaeological dig went well with the Boy Scouts. Mr. Vanderlin is working on landscaping projects again at Hanley Park and Rosemary reported that it is absolutely beautiful at the site.

Respectfully submitted by:
Denise Ucinski